



**NEW ENGLAND
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items
2006**

**Grade 4
Reading**

Reading

- ❶ The word hear belongs in which sentence?
- ☐ A. People come ____ for vacation.
 - ☐ B. I want to sit ____ by the window.
 - ☐ C. She can ____ us talking loudly.
 - ☐ D. Please put my books over ____.
- ❷ Which word has a suffix (ending) that means most?
- ☐ A. clearest
 - ☐ B. visitors
 - ☐ C. jobless
 - ☐ D. cleaning

Read this poem about a secret place. Then answer the questions that follow.

Under the Back Porch

Our house is two stories high
shaped like a white box.
There is a yard stretched around it
and in back
a wooden porch.

Under the back porch is my place.
I rest there.
I go there when I have to be alone.
It is always shaded and damp.
Sunlight only slants through the slats
in long strips of light,
and the smell of the damp
is moist green,
like the moss that grows here.

My sisters and brothers
can stand on the back porch
and never know
I am here
underneath.
It is my place.
All mine.

—Virginia Hamilton

Our house is two stories high shaped like a white box.

- 3 Which sentence uses the word stories in the **same** way?
- ☐ A. She likes to read long stories to us.
 - ☐ B. I wrote some stories for the newspaper.
 - ☐ C. Our school building is three stories tall.
 - ☐ D. My grandfather tells stories about his old house.
- 4 Why does the speaker like to rest under the back porch?
- ☐ A. to scare her sisters and brothers
 - ☐ B. to look at the plants growing there
 - ☐ C. to play in the long strips of sunlight
 - ☐ D. to be alone in a place she enjoys

- 5 In this poem, “the smell of the damp” reminds the speaker of the
- ☐ A. dark shade.
 - ☐ B. strips of sunlight.
 - ☐ C. moss that is growing.
 - ☐ D. wooden porch boards.
- 6 Which words mean the **opposite** of underneath?
- ☐ A. on top of
 - ☐ B. next to
 - ☐ C. to one side of
 - ☐ D. close to

7 Explain why the back porch is a special place for the speaker. Use details from the poem.

[illegible]

A fascinating place is somewhere very interesting. Read this passage about why forests are fascinating places. Then answer the questions that follow.

Fascinating Forests

by Luann Hankom

A forest is an area of land where trees grow close together. It's an environment filled with life: trees, plants, animals, and insects. Forests grow all over the world. Differences in climate, soil, and water have created three major forest types.

Most forests can be divided from top to bottom into five basic layers.

The leaves at the tops of the tallest trees form the first layer, called the **canopy**. Every forest has a canopy, sometimes more than 100 feet above the ground! The leafy branches and twigs provide shelter to all the forest life below. Some forest canopies are so thick that not much sunlight reaches the forest floor.

Just beneath the canopy, there's a lot of activity. In tropical rain forests, brightly colored birds like toucans search for fruit, while monkeys climb the branches. In other forests, small birds like warblers fly in the branches, as caterpillars munch on leaves. A downy woodpecker taps on a spruce, and an owl sleeps in its nest.

The second layer down is the **understory**, with smaller trees that are at least 33 feet tall. Some of the trees in this layer have grown as tall as they ever will. Others are young saplings, smaller versions of the giants that make up the canopy.

Third is the **shrub layer**. This layer is made up of plants with tough, woody stems, growing from 3 feet to 33 feet high. In tropical seasonal forests, bamboo and palm trees grow in this layer. Shrubs can grow thick on the forest floor if there's enough sunlight.

Fourth, the **herb layer** grows below the shrubs. This layer includes soft plants such as ferns, grasses, and wildflowers. Butterflies and bees are attracted to their bright flowers. Snakes slither, mice scuttle, and turtles plod along in the herb layer.

The fifth layer is the **ground layer**, or forest floor, which is cool, moist, and dark. Here are mosses, lichens, tree roots, and animal droppings. Dead leaves cover the ground, and rotting logs are scattered about. Spiders, beetles, and centipedes crawl along the ground.

From top to bottom, around the world, forests are fascinating places.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are unable to reprint the illustration that accompanied the passage in this document. The illustration showed the forest layers and the animals that live within each layer.

8 According to the passage, which statement is true about a forest canopy?

- ☐ A. Most of its trees are around 33 feet tall.
- ☐ B. Bamboo and palm trees grow there.
- ☐ C. Leafy branches and twigs provide shelter there.
- ☐ D. Butterflies are attracted to its bright flowers.

9 Which layer of the forest has soft plants such as ferns?

- ☐ A. the canopy layer
- ☐ B. the shrub layer
- ☐ C. the herb layer
- ☐ D. the ground layer

10 Which sentence states an **opinion**?

- ☐ A. "A forest is an area of land where trees grow close together."
- ☐ B. "Most forests can be divided from top to bottom into five basic layers."
- ☐ C. "Butterflies and bees are attracted to their bright flowers."
- ☐ D. "From top to bottom, around the world, forests are fascinating places."

11 Which word has the same **vowel sound** as ferns?

- ☐ A. search
- ☐ B. fruit
- ☐ C. here
- ☐ D. plants

- 12 Use four details from the passage to complete the chart. The first part has been filled in for you.

Forest Layer	One Kind of Plant or Animal That Lives in the Layer
Canopy	brightly colored toucans
Understory	
Shrub Layer	
Herb Layer	
Ground Layer	

Acknowledgments

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Grade 4 Reading Released Item Information

Released Item Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Content Strand ¹	WV	WV	WV	LA	LI	WV	LA	II	II	IA	WV	II
GLE Code	3-3	3-2	3-3	3-5	3-4	3-3	3-5	3-7	3-7	3-8	3-1	3-7
Depth of Knowledge Code	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1
Item Type ²	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	CR	MC	MC	MC	MC	CR
Answer Key	C	A	C	D	C	A		C	C	D	A	
Total Possible Points	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	4

¹Content Strand: WV = Word ID/Vocabulary, LI = Literary/Initial Understanding, LA = Literary/Analysis & Interpretation,
II = Informational/Initial Understanding, IA = Informational/Analysis & Interpretation

²Item Type: MC = Multiple Choice, SA = Short Answer, CR = Constructed Response



**NEW ENGLAND
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items
Support Materials
2006**

**Grade 4
Reading**

**NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING**

3.3.1 Shows breadth of vocabulary knowledge through demonstrating understanding of word meanings or relationships by identifying synonyms, antonyms, or homonyms/ homophones; or categorizing words

- ❶ The word hear belongs in which sentence?
- ☐ A. People come ____ for vacation.
 - ☐ B. I want to sit ____ by the window.
 - ☐ C. She can ____ us talking loudly.
 - ☐ D. Please put my books over ____.

3.2.1 Students identify the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary by using strategies to unlock meaning (e.g., knowledge of word structure, including prefixes/suffixes and base words, such as “un-covered;” or context clues; or other resources, such as dictionaries, glossaries; or prior knowledge)

- ❷ Which word has a suffix (ending) that means most?
- ☐ A. clearest
 - ☐ B. visitors
 - ☐ C. jobless
 - ☐ D. cleaning

Under the Back Porch

Literary Text

3.3.2 Shows breadth of vocabulary knowledge through demonstrating understanding of word meanings or relationships by selecting appropriate words to use in context, including content specific vocabulary (e.g., predator/prey), or words with multiple meanings)

Our house is two stories high shaped like a white box.

- 3 Which sentence uses the word stories in the **same** way?
- ☐ A. She likes to read long stories to us.
 - ☐ B. I wrote some stories for the newspaper.
 - ☐ C. Our school building is three stories tall.
 - ☐ D. My grandfather tells stories about his old house.

3.5.2 Analyze and interpret elements of literary texts, citing evidence where appropriate by describing main characters' physical characteristics or personality traits; or providing examples of thoughts, words or actions that reveal characters' personality traits

- 4 Why does the speaker like to rest under the back porch?
- ☐ A. to scare her sisters and brothers
 - ☐ B. to look at the plants growing there
 - ☐ C. to play in the long strips of sunlight
 - ☐ D. to be alone in a place she enjoys

Under the Back Porch

Literary Text

3.4.1 Demonstrate initial understanding of elements of literary texts by identifying or describing character(s), setting, problem/solution, major events, or plot, as appropriate to text

- 5 In this poem, “the smell of the damp” reminds the speaker of the
- ☐ A. dark shade.
 - ☐ B. strips of sunlight.
 - ☐ C. moss that is growing.
 - ☐ D. wooden porch boards.

3.3.1 Shows breadth of vocabulary knowledge through demonstrating understanding of word meanings or relationships by identifying synonyms, antonyms, or homonyms/ homophones; or categorizing words

- 6 Which words mean the **opposite** of underneath?
- ☐ A. on top of
 - ☐ B. next to
 - ☐ C. to one side of
 - ☐ D. close to

Under the Back Porch

Literary Text

3.5.5 Analyze and interpret elements of literary texts, citing evidence where appropriate by identifying the author's basic message

- 7 Explain why the back porch is a special place for the speaker. Use details from the poem.

Scoring Guide:

Score	Description
4	Response provides a thorough explanation of why the back porch is a special place for the speaker. Response includes relevant details from the poem.
3	Response provides an explanation of why the back porch is a special place for the speaker. Response lacks some relevant details from the poem or is not fully developed.
2	Response provides a partial explanation of why the back porch is a special place for the speaker. Response includes limited details from the poem.
1	Response is vague/minimal.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response

Training Notes:

Details from the poem that show the back porch is a special place for the speaker:

- "I rest there."
- "I go there when I have to be alone."
- "It is always shaded and damp."
- "Sunlight only slants through the slats/in long strips of light . . ."
- ". . . the smell of the damp is moist green, like the moss that grows here."
- "My sisters and brothers can stand on the back porch and never know I am here underneath."
- "It is my place. All mine."

NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING

SCORE POINT 4

The back porch is a special place for her to be alone and it can be a special hiding place to be away from her brothers and sisters. It's also a favorite so she can sit and feel the strips of sunlight which she likes. The porch is a fun place to sit under ALONE!

Response provides a thorough explanation of why the back porch is a special place and includes relevant details from the poem.

NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING

SCORE POINT 3

I think the porch is a special place. Because it is quiet and perfect. But of course nobody bothers you and sunlight comes through the cracks.

Response provides an explanation of why the back porch is a special place and includes details from the poem.

SCORE POINT 2

Under the porch is special to her because she can be alone and she can smell damp moss and last she can rest.

Response provides a partial explanation of why the back porch is a special place and includes limited details from the poem.

NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING

SCORE POINT 1

It is special because she likes to
be alone.

Response provides a minimal explanation.

SCORE POINT 0

Because it reminds him of
places.

Response is irrelevant.

Fascinating Forests

Informational Text

3.7.2 Demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts (expository and practical texts) by using information from the text to answer questions related to explicitly stated main/central ideas or details

- 8** According to the passage, which statement is true about a forest canopy?
- ☐ A. Most of its trees are around 33 feet tall.
 - ☐ B. Bamboo and palm trees grow there.
 - ☐ C. Leafy branches and twigs provide shelter there.
 - ☐ D. Butterflies are attracted to its bright flowers.

3.7.2 Demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts (expository and practical texts) by using information from the text to answer questions related to explicitly stated main/central ideas or details

- 9** Which layer of the forest has soft plants such as ferns?
- ☐ A. the canopy layer
 - ☐ B. the shrub layer
 - ☐ C. the herb layer
 - ☐ D. the ground layer

Fascinating Forests

Informational Text

3.8.4 Analyze and interpret informational texts, citing evidence where appropriate by distinguishing fact from opinion

- 10 Which sentence states an **opinion**?
- ☐ A. "A forest is an area of land where trees grow close together."
 - ☐ B. "Most forests can be divided from top to bottom into five basic layers."
 - ☐ C. "Butterflies and bees are attracted to their bright flowers."
 - ☐ D. "From top to bottom, around the world, forests are fascinating places."

3.1.1 Applies word identification/ decoding strategies by identifying multi-syllabic words, by using knowledge of sounds, syllable types, or word patterns (including prefixes, suffixes, or variant spellings for consonants or vowels, e.g., bought)

- 11 Which word has the same **vowel sound** as ferns?
- ☐ A. search
 - ☐ B. fruit
 - ☐ C. here
 - ☐ D. plants

Fascinating Forests

Informational Text

3.7.3 Demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts (expository and practical texts) by organizing information to show understanding (e.g., representing main/central ideas or details within text through charting or mapping)

- 12 Use four details from the passage to complete the chart. The first part has been filled in for you.

Forest Layer	One Kind of Plant or Animal That Lives in the Layer
Canopy	brightly colored toucans
Understory	
Shrub Layer	
Herb Layer	
Ground Layer	

**NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING**

Scoring Guide:

Score	Description
4	Response includes four correct answers in the chart.
3	Response includes three correct answers in the chart.
2	Response includes two correct answers in the chart.
1	Response includes one correct answer in the chart. OR Response is vague/minimal.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response

Training Notes:

Forest Layer	One Kind of Plant or Animal That Lives in the Layer
Canopy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brightly colored toucans/birds • woodpecker/owl/birds • caterpillars • monkeys
Understory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trees at least 33 feet tall • young saplings • flying squirrel/bat
Shrub Layer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plants with tough, woody stems • bamboo and palm trees/trees • shrubs • sloth/opossum/porcupine/raccoon
Herb Layer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soft plants such as ferns, grasses, and wildflowers • bright flowers • butterflies • bees • snakes • mouse/mice • turtles • chipmunk
Ground Layer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mosses • lichens • tree roots • spiders • beetles • centipedes

Accept any plant or animal that appears in the text or the illustration. Please note that the illustration is not included in this document.

NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING

SCORE POINT 4

Forest Layer	One Kind of Plant or Animal That Lives in the Layer
Canopy	brightly colored toucans
Understory	young saplings
Shrub Layer	palm trees
Herb Layer	wild flowers
Ground Layer	mosses

Response provides four correct answers in the chart.

NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING

SCORE POINT 3

Forest Layer	One Kind of Plant or Animal That Lives in the Layer
Canopy	brightly colored toucans
Understory	monkeys
Shrub Layer	palm trees
Herb Layer	ferns
Ground Layer	bugs + animal droppings.

Response provides three correct answers in the chart.

NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING

SCORE POINT 2

Forest Layer	One Kind of Plant or Animal That Lives in the Layer
Canopy	brightly colored toucans
Understory	an owl in its nest
Shrub Layer	bamboo and Palmtrees
Herb Layer	buttiful butter flys
Ground Layer	nice shrubs

Response provides two correct answers in the chart.

NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING

SCORE POINT 1

Forest Layer	One Kind of Plant or Animal That Lives in the Layer
Canopy	brightly colored toucans
Understory	branches
Shrub Layer	wood
Herb Layer	leaves
Ground Layer	bugs

Response provides one correct answer in the chart.

NECAP 2006 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 4 READING

SCORE POINT 0

Forest Layer	One Kind of Plant or Animal That Lives in the Layer
Canopy	brightly colored toucans
Understory	bear
Shrub Layer	wolf
Herb Layer	people's
Ground Layer	clidcoys

Response is irrelevant.